

Message Text

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TO USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 122688

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, SREF, PINT, IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQI CHRISTIANS: IRAQI STATEMENT OF NON-
PROSECUTION

(A) STATE 48749, (B) STATE 66570, (C) STATE 83315

1. WE ARE SURPRISED YOU ASKED ANBARI ABOUT IRAQI WILLING-
NESS TO MAKE A STATEMENT OF NON-PROSECUTION WITH REGARD TO A
SPECIFIC GROUP OF IRAQI CHRISTIANS, SINCE WE THOUGHT OUR
POSITION ON THIS KIND OF STATEMENT HAS MADE CLEAR IN REF C.
BASICALLY, WE COULD NOT RPT NOT CONSIDER ANY SUCH STATEMENT
AS CREDIBLE. IT WOULD FALL INTO THE SAME CATEGORY AS THE
IRAQI STATEMENT OF A FEW YEARS AGO WELCOMING THE RETURN OF
ALL IRAQI JEWS WHO HAD LEFT THE COUNTRY. IF AN IRAQI
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STATEMENT OF NON-PROSECUTION OR NON-PERSECUTION WAS INTRO-
DUCED INTO COURT CONSIDERATION OF THESE CASES, THE DEPART-
MENT PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE A POSITION THAT THE STATE-
MENT HAS NO RPT NO REAL CREDIBILITY. WITH THE PRESENT
GOVERNING REGIME IN IRAQ, WE CAN FORESEE NO CIRCUMSTANCES
UNDER WHICH THE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE A PARTY OR WOULD AGREE
TO THE FORCIBLE REPATRIATION TO IRAQ OF THE IRAQI

CHRISTIANS NOW SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE U.S. AFTER HAVING LIVED IN THIRD COUNTRIES, HOWEVER WEAK THEIR CASE MIGHT BE FOR ASYLUM.

2. IF THE SUBJECT COMES UP AGAIN, WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BE STRICTLY NON-COMMITTAL.

3. WE DELIVERED TO IRAQINT A BRIEF DIPLOMATIC NOTE (POUCHED USINT) IN RESPONSE TO THEIR NOTE IN REFTEL B. THE NOTE SAID QUOTE SINCE JULY 1977 APPROXIMATELY 250 IRAQI CITIZENS HAVE SOUGHT POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES. IT IS THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN ALL POLITICAL ASYLUM CASES, HOWEVER, NOT TO MAKE KNOWN THE NAMES OF THESE PERSONS UNQUOTE. THE NOTE CONTINUES THAT ADJUDICATING THE CLAIMS OF PERSONS SEEKING ASYLUM CAN BE A LENGTHY PROCESS AND THAT NONE OF THE CASES SINCE JULY 1977 HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. WE BROKE NO NEW GROUND WITH IRAQINT CHIEF IN BRIEF AND LOW-KEY DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE. VANCE

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